

Q. A few questions about Robert Byrd, the new Senate Majority Leader: What is his real name? Was he ever leader of the Ku Klux Klan? Is it true that he has held more legislative elective offices in West Virginia than any other single person?—V.L., Charleston, W.Va.

A. Sen. Robert Byrd (D., W.Va.) was born in North Wilkesboro, N.C., on Nov. 20, 1917. He was christened Cornelius Calvin Sale Jr. His mother died during his infancy, he was abandoned by his father and adopted by a coal miner named Byrd. He joined the KKK as a young man in what he describes as "a youthful indiscretion" and briefly held the rank of klingle. He was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates in 1946, subsequently went on to win more legislative elective offices in West Virginia than any other person.



SEN. ROBERT BYRD

Byrd 11/20/77